



— State of —
North Dakota
Office of the Governor
John Hoeven
Governor

October 24, 2003

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
15th & Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Veneman:

North Dakota's agricultural economy has been impacted by several disaster conditions this past production season.

The disaster conditions identified are: flooding, ground saturation, storms, wind, tornadoes, high humidity, dry conditions and severe temperatures that began this spring and persisted well into the growing season. All of these disaster conditions have impacted producers throughout North Dakota from April 1, 2003, and they have continued.

Based on information contained in Damage Assessment Reports (DAR), requested by me on August 26, 2003, and prepared by all North Dakota County USDA Emergency Boards, the State Emergency Board recommended by unanimous vote that we seek a Secretarial Disaster Designation for the following counties Adams, Barnes, Billings, Bottineau, Bowman, Burke, Burleigh, Cass, Cavalier, Dickey, Divide, Dunn, Emmons, Golden Valley, Grand Forks, Grant, Griggs, Hettinger, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McHenry, McIntosh, McKenzie, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Mountrail, Oliver, Pierce, Ramsey, Ransom, Renville, Rolette, Sargent, Sheridan, Steele, Sioux, Slope, Stark, Stutsman, Towner, Trail, Walsh, Ward, Wells and Williams in North Dakota.

The Damage Assessment Reports indicate the following: 47 counties meet the criteria for both a 30 percent or greater crop loss countrywide; or have one or more individual producers who had a 30 percent or greater crop loss and be unable to obtain credit from sources other than FSA. In designating the 47 counties identified above, there would be six additional counties that could qualify for Emergency Loan Assistance according to the contiguous county rule. The six counties are: Benson, Eddy, Foster, Nelson, Pembina and Richland.

Based on these reports, I formally request that you issue a Secretarial Disaster Designation for the North Dakota counties currently meeting the USDA criteria. Such action will ensure that appropriate additional disaster assistance, to include emergency loan and debt restructuring programs, resulting from or through USDA or Small Business Administration action, can be made available to eligible producers and agricultural-related businesses.

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I request that you act favorably on this request and the North Dakota USDA Emergency Board recommendations for a Secretarial Disaster Designation. Such action will help us work together to reduce the hardships caused by the conditions described. This request requires immediate attention to ensure implementation of all essential assistance programs in a timely manner.

Please contact Lance Gaebe in my office if you require additional information. Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,
/s/
John Hoeven
Governor

38:47:49

cc: Gary J. Nelson, State Executive Director, ND Farm Service Agency, USDA
Roger Johnson, ND Commissioner of Agriculture
Honorable Byron Dorgan, U.S. Senate
Honorable Kent Conrad, U.S. Senate
Honorable Earl Pomeroy, U.S. House of Representatives
Douglas C. Friez, Director, North Dakota Division of Emergency Management